

#### **Congressional Budget Office**

## **Telling Visual Stories About Data**

Presentation for the:
Seminar on Independent Budget Analysis & Transparency

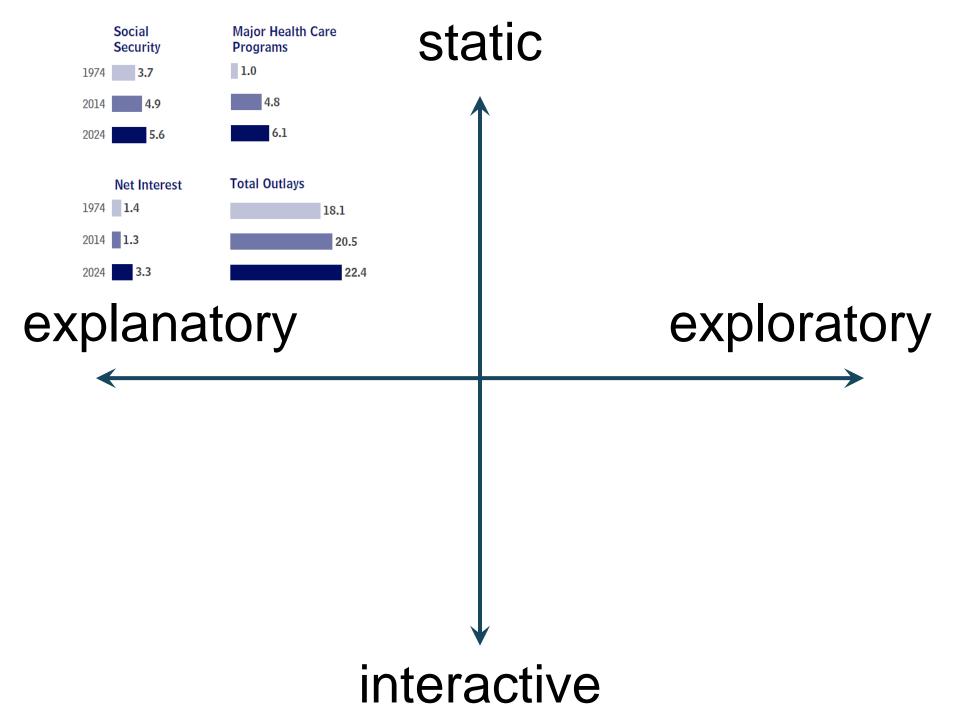
A Global Network of Parliamentary Budget Offices Community Meeting

Peter Fontaine
Assistant Director for Budget Analysis
June 2014

# Know Your Audience



# Members of Congress and Staff

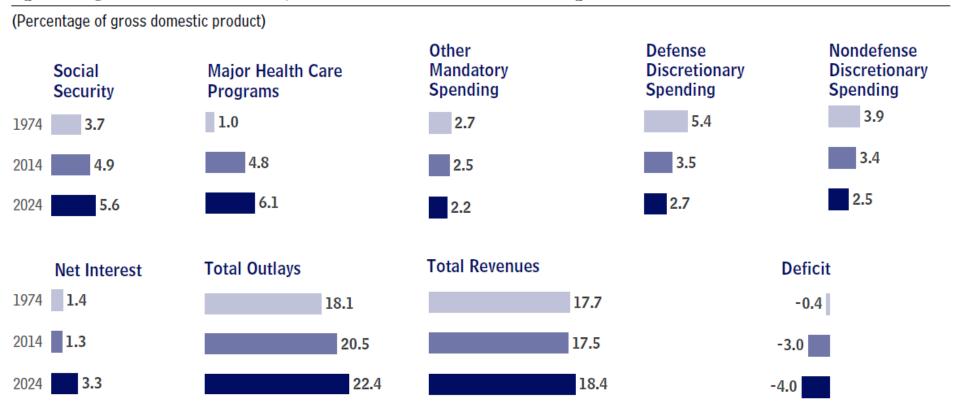


# How CBO Communicates

# Reports

Figure 1-2.

#### Spending and Revenues Projected in CBO's Baseline, Compared With Levels in 1974



				Revenues, Outlays, and Balances as a Percentage of GDP			75 Year Present Value as a Perecntage of			
				Year				Taxable	Tours Sund	
		Option Name		2020	2040	2060	2080	GDP	Payroll	Trust Fund Exhaustion Yea
			Revenues <sup>b</sup>	4.9	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.2	14.4	
		Baseline <sup>a</sup>	Outlays <sup>c</sup>	5.2	6.2	6.0	6.3	5.8	16.0	20XX
			Balance <sup>d</sup>	-0.3	-1.3	-1.1	-1.3	-0.6	-1.6	
				Changes in Revenues, Outlays, and Balances as a Percentage of GDP		Change in 75 Year Present Value as a Percentage of				
				Year			GDP Tax	Taxable	Change in Trust	
		Option Name		2020	2040	2060	2080	GDP	Payroll	Exhaustion Year
		Increase the Payroll Tax Rate by 1 Percentage Point in 2012	Revenues	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.0	xx
	1		Outlays Balance	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	1.0	
		Increase the Payroll Tax Rate by 2 Percentage Points over 20 Years	Revenues	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.5		YY
	2		Outlays	*	*					
			Balance	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.6	1.6	
	3	Increase the Payroll Tax Rate by 3 Percentage Points over 60 Years	Revenues	0.2	0.5	0.8	1.0	0.5	1.5	
			Outlays	*	*	*	*		*	ZZ
			Balance	0.2	0.5	0.9	1.1	0.5	1.4	
		Eliminate the Taxable Maximum	Revenues	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	n.a.	
	4		Outlays	*	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.3	n.a.	AA
			Balance	0.8	0.6		0.4	0.6		
		Raise the Taable Maximum to Cover 90% of Earnings	Revenues	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4		
	5		Outlays	*	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1		BB
		5070 O. Collings	Balance	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	n.a.	

Table 2.

#### Changes to Social Security's Finances Under Various Options with Scheduled Benefits

(Percentage of GDP)

(Percentage of GDP)								
								Year
								Value as a ntage of
								Taxable
		2020	2040	2060	2080	Annual Finances	GDP	Payroll
						Current Law <sup>a</sup>		
						Revenues and Outlays <sup>b</sup>		
	Revenues	4.9	4.9	4.9	5.0		5.2	14.4
	Outlays	5.2	6.2	6.0	6.3		5.8	16.0
	Balance	-0.3	-1.3	-1.1	-1.3		-0.6	-1.6
				Derce	ntage-D	oint Change from Current Law		
Change the Taxation of Ear	nings			reree	illage P	Change in Annual Balance <sup>c</sup>		
1	Revenues	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3		0.3	1.0
Increase the Payroll Tax	Outlays <sup>d</sup>	*	*	*	*		*	*
Rate by 1 Percentage Point in 2012	Balance	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4		0.3	1.0
111 2012								
2	Revenues	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.7		0.5	1.6
Increase the Payroll Tax	Outlays <sup>d</sup>	*	*	*	*		*	*
Rate by 2 Percentage Points Over 20 Years	Balance	0.3	0.7	0.7	8.0		0.6	1.6
3	Revenues	0.2	0.5	0.8	1.0		0.5	1.5
Increase the Payroll Tax		*	*	*	*		*	*
Rate by 3 Percentage	Outlays <sup>d</sup>							
Points Over 60 years	Balance	0.2	0.5	0.9	1.1		0.5	1.4
4	Revenues	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9		0.9	n.a.
Eliminate the Taxable	Outlays	*	0.3	0.5	0.5		0.3	n.a.
Maximum <sup>e</sup>	Balance	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.4		0.6	n.a.

Figure 1. Continued

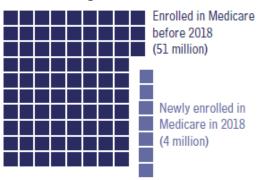
#### Key Operations Under the Illustrative Second-Lowest-Bid Option for Premium Support

#### **Participation**

Dual-eligible beneficiaries (who enroll in Medicare and Medicaid simultaneously) are excluded.

Anyone else enrolled in Medicare when the program takes effect enters the new system.

#### Number of Eligible Beneficiaries



People who become eligible after 2018 (except dual-eligible beneficiaries) enter the new system when they become eligible.

#### Plan Selection and Premiums

Beneficiaries either select a plan or are assigned to a plan with a bid at or below the benchmark.

#### For all beneficiaries:

beneficiary's premium = standard premium + plan's bid - benchmark

Plan	Premium				
Plan Z-2	Standard + \$\$\$				
Plan B-1	Standard + \$\$				
FFS	Standard + \$\$				
Plan A-2	Standard + \$				
Plan B-2	Standard + \$				
Plan Z-1	Standard ← The second-lowest bid is the benchmark.				
Plan A-1	Standard – \$				

The standard premium is calculated as 25 percent of the national average of the cost per beneficiary for services and supplies covered by Part B.

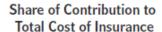
#### Federal Contribution

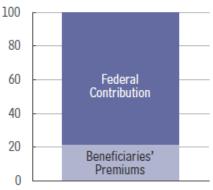
The government pays most of the cost of insurance for covered Part A and Part B benefits.

#### For a beneficiary in average health:

federal contribution = benchmark — standard premium

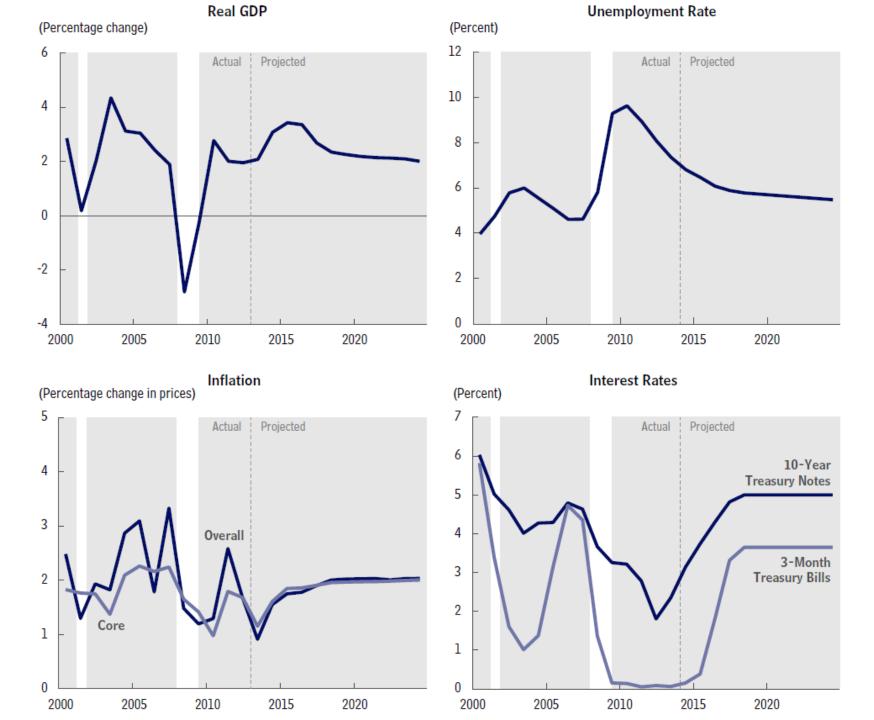
The payment to each plan is adjusted up or down for beneficiaries in worse or better health than average.





#### For all plans:

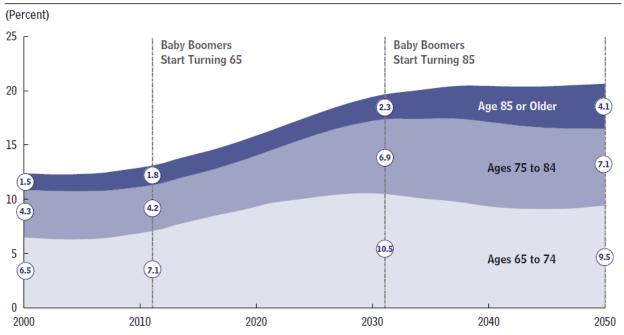
total payments received for a beneficiary in average health = bid



# Reports Chartbooks

Exhibit 1.

#### Elderly Adults As a Share of the U.S. Population, 2000 to 2050



Source: Congressional Budget Office tabulations based on population projections reported in *The 2012 Long-Term Budget Outlook* (June 2012), www.cbo.gov/publication/43288.

Note: Members of the baby-boom generation (people born between 1946 and 1964) started turning 65 in 2011 and will turn 85 beginning in 2031.

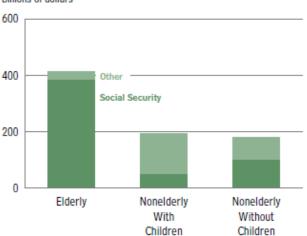
Between 1946 and 1964, more than 75 million babies were born in the United States, forming a cohort that has come to be known as the baby-boom generation. The oldest people in the group turned 65 in 2011. The aging of that generation, in combination with increases in longevity and other factors, will cause the share of the population age 65 or older to grow rapidly from 2010 to 2030. The share of the population age 85 or older will grow rapidly beginning around 2030 and continuing until at least 2050.

#### Summary Figure 1.

#### Distribution of Federal Spending and Taxes, by Type of Household, 2006

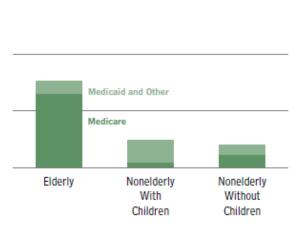
#### Spending on Cash and Near-Cash Transfers

Billions of dollars



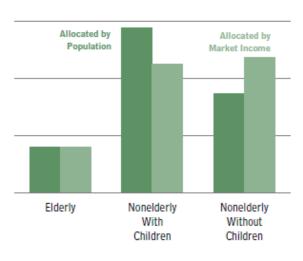
About 30 percent of federal spending in 2006, or \$785 billion, went to assistance programs that provide cash payments or "near-cash" benefits (such as help with food, housing, or college tuition) to households. Social Security accounted for more than two-thirds of that spending and therefore significantly affected its distribution. About \$415 billion in cash and near-cash transfers went to elderly households. of which more than \$385 billion—or almost 95 percent—was spending on Social Security.

#### Spending on Health Care Transfers



About 18 percent of federal spending in 2006, or approximately \$480 billion, went to programs that provide health care benefits. The largest of those programs is Medicare, which accounted for over two-thirds of spending in this category. About \$305 billion in health care transfers went to elderly households, including about \$260 billion or 85 percent—in net spending on Medicare.

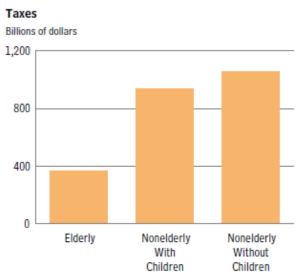
#### Spending on Other Goods and Services



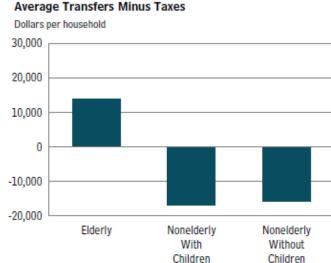
About 40 percent of federal spending in 2006, or \$1.1 trillion, was for things other than transfers, such as national defense, the judicial system, agriculture, and education. (That figure excludes interest payments on federal debt held by the public.) Because of uncertainty about how best to allocate such spending among households, CBO allocated it in two alternative ways: in proportion to each household's share of the population (that is, with spending divided equally among everyone in the United States) and in proportion to each household's share of total market income.

Summary Figure 1. Continued

#### Distribution of Federal Spending and Taxes, by Type of Household, 2006

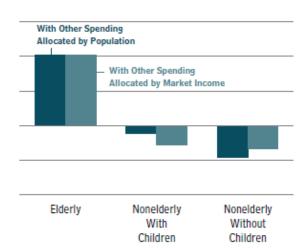


The federal government collected \$2.4 trillion in revenues in 2006. Overall, the three types of households accounted for shares of total revenues that were roughly equal to their shares of total market income. People in elderly households paid taxes (including customs duties) that accounted for 15 percent of revenues in 2006; people in nonelderly households with children, 39 percent; and people in nonelderly households without children, 44 percent. (The remaining 2 percent of federal revenues were not allocated to households in this analysis.)



On average, elderly households received more in cash, near-cash, and health care transfers in 2006 than they paid in taxes, whereas nonelderly households paid more in taxes than they received in transfers. Average transfers exceeded taxes paid by about \$14,000 for elderly households, but tax payments exceeded transfers by about \$17,000 for nonelderly households with children present and by about \$16,000 for nonelderly households without children present.

#### Average Spending Minus Taxes

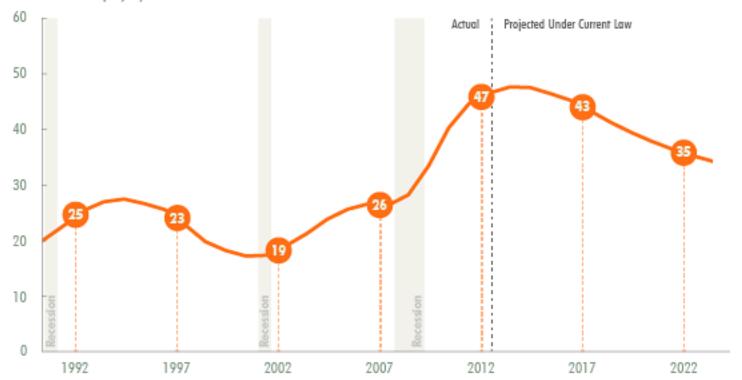


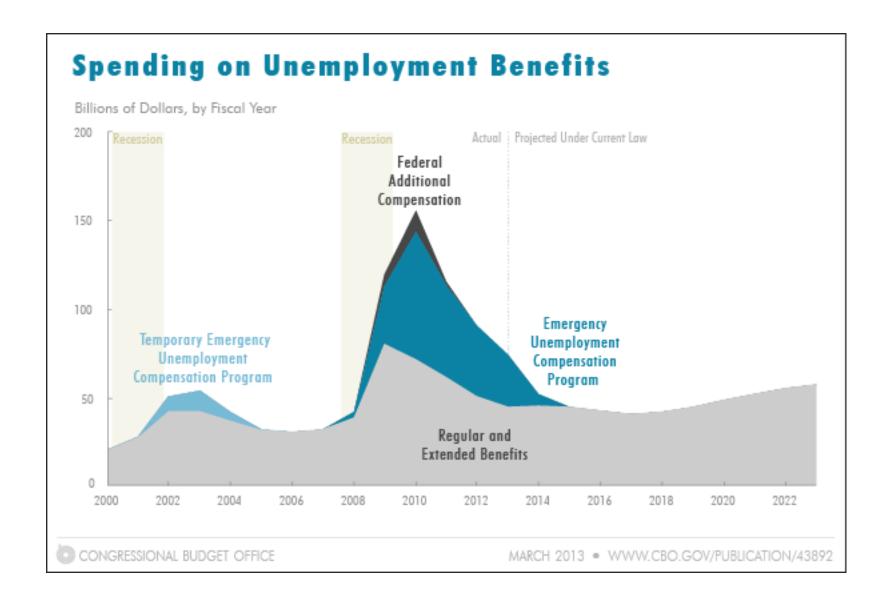
With federal spending on other goods and services added to spending on transfers, average spending on elderly households in 2006 outstripped the average taxes paid by those households by about \$20,000. In contrast, taxes paid exceeded federal spending by an average of about \$2,000 for nonelderly households with children present and \$9,000 for nonelderly households without children present if spending on other goods and services is allocated in proportion to each household's share of the population; those differences were about \$6,000 and \$7,000, respectively, if such spending is allocated in proportion to a household's share of market income.

# Reports Chartbooks Snapshots

#### Average Monthly Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Millions of People, by Fiscal Year





# Reports Chartbooks Snapshots Presentations

## Before

We Estimate that ACA Coverage Provisions Will Have a Significant Effect on Some People but Little Effect on Most People: Part 1

CBO and JCT's projections for 2023 for people under age 65 relative to prior law:

- About 25 million more people will have health insurance, as the number of uninsured will fall from 56 million to 31 million.
- Of those 31 million:
  - About 30% will be unauthorized immigrants and thereby ineligible for almost all Medicaid benefits and exchange subsidies;
  - About 20% will be eligible for Medicaid but choose not to enroll;
  - About 5% will not be eligible for Medicaid because their state chose not to expand coverage; and
  - About 45% will have access to insurance through an employer or could buy it through an exchange or directly from an insurer.

JCT refers to the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation.

## **After**

# The Affordable Care Act Will Significantly Reduce the Number of People Without Health Insurance

Projections for 2023, People Under Age 65

Under Prior Law: 57 Million Uninsured

Under the ACA: 31 Million Uninsured

Unauthorized Immigrants **30%** 

Ineligible for almost all Medicaid benefits and exchange subsidies Eligible for Medicaid **20**%

But choose not to enroll Not Eligible for Medicaid

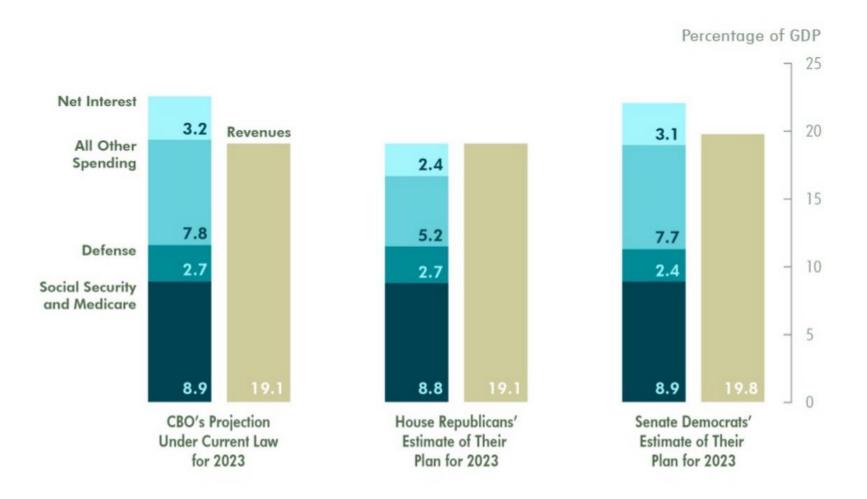
5%

Have Access to Insurance 45%

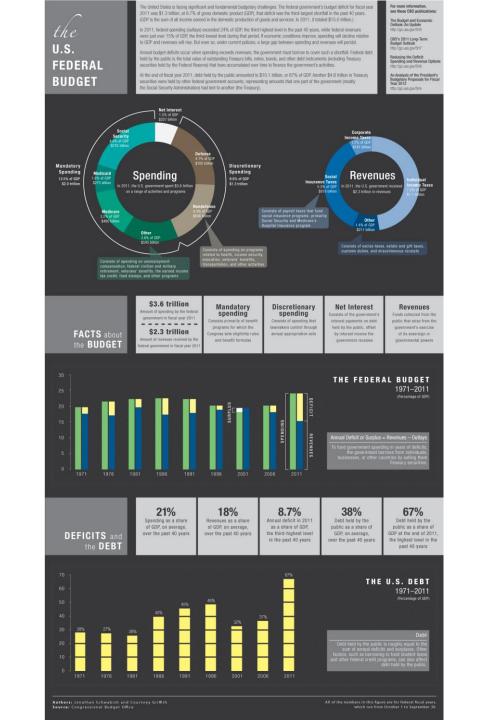
Their state not expanding coverage

Through an employer or could buy it through an exchange or directly from an insurer

## Current House and Senate Budget Plans Would Make Significant Changes to Revenues and Certain Categories of Spending Relative to Current Law



# Reports Chartbooks Snapshots Presentations Infographics



# the U.S. FEDERAL BUDGET

The United States is facing significant and fundamental budgetary challenges. The federal government's budget deficit for fiscal year 2011 was \$1.3 trillion; at 8.7% of gross domestic product (GDP), that deficit was the third-largest shortfall in the past 40 years. (GDP is the sum of all income earned in the domestic production of goods and services. In 2011, it totaled \$15.0 trillion.)

In 2011, federal spending (outlays) exceeded 24% of GDP, the third-highest level in the past 40 years, while federal revenues were just over 15% of GDP, the third-lowest level during that period. If economic conditions improve, spending will decline relative to GDP and revenues will rise. But even so, under current policies, a large gap between spending and revenues will persist.

Annual budget deficits occur when spending exceeds revenues; the government must borrow to cover such a shortfall. Federal debt held by the public is the total value of outstanding Treasury bills, notes, bonds, and other debt instruments (including Treasury securities held by the Federal Reserve) that have accumulated over time to finance the government's activities.

At the end of fiscal year 2011, debt held by the public amounted to \$10.1 trillion, or 67% of GDP. Another \$4.6 trillion in Treasury securities were held by other federal government accounts, representing amounts that one part of the government (mostly the Social Security Administration) had lent to another (the Treasury).

For more information, see these CBO publications:

The Budget and Economic Outlook: An Update

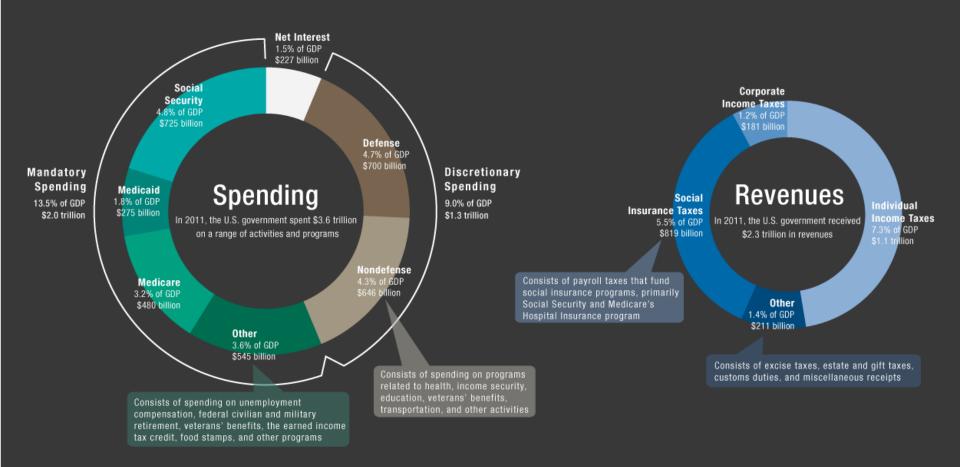
http://go.usa.gov/5H0

CBO's 2011 Long-Term Budget Outlook http://go.usa.gov/5H7

Reducing the Deficit: Spending and Revenue Options http://go.usa.gov/5HA

An Analysis of the President's Budgetary Proposals for Fiscal Year 2012

http://go.usa.gov/5Ho



FACTS about the BUDGET

#### \$3.6 trillion

Amount of spending by the federal government in fiscal year 2011

#### \$2.3 trillion

Amount of revenues received by the federal government in fiscal year 2011

#### Mandatory spending

Consists primarily of benefit programs for which the Congress sets eligibility rules and benefit formulas

#### Discretionary spending

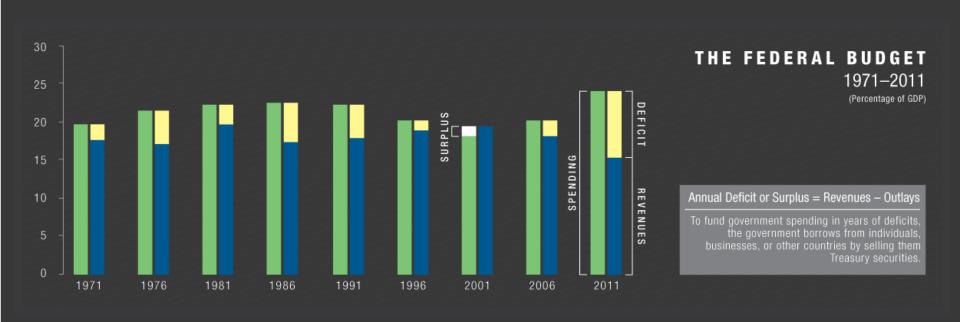
Consists of spending that lawmakers control through annual appropriation acts

#### **Net Interest**

Consists of the government's interest payments on debt held by the public, offset by interest income the government receives

#### Revenues

Funds collected from the public that arise from the government's exercise of its sovereign or governmental powers



**DEFICITS** and the **DEBT** 

21%

Spending as a share of GDP, on average, over the past 40 years 18%

Revenues as a share of GDP, on average, over the past 40 years 8.7%

Annual deficit in 2011 as a share of GDP, the third-highest level in the past 40 years 38%

Debt held by the public as a share of GDP, on average, over the past 40 years **67**%

Debt held by the public as a share of GDP at the end of 2011, the highest level in the past 40 years

### **DEFICITS** and the **DEBT**

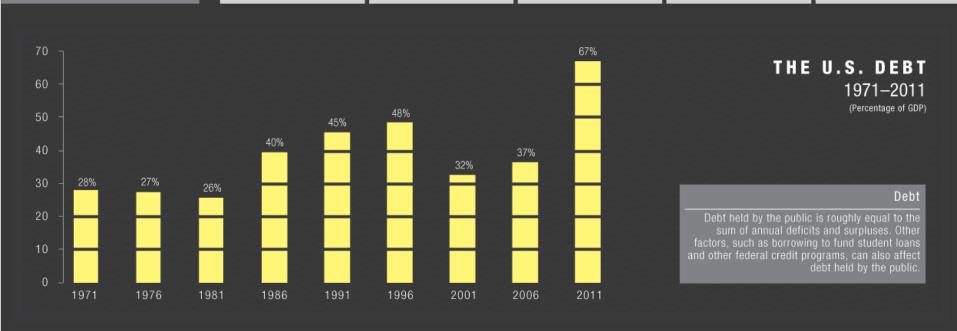
21% Spending as a share of GDP, on average, over the past 40 years 18%
Revenues as a share of GDP, on average, over the past 40 years

8.7%
Annual deficit in 2011
as a share of GDP,
the third-highest level
in the past 40 years

38%

Debt held by the public as a share of GDP, on average, over the past 40 years

67%
Debt held by the public as a share of GDP at the end of 2011, the highest level in the past 40 years



Authors: Jonathan Schwabish and Courtney Griffith Source: Congressional Budget Office

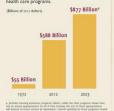
All of the numbers in this figure are for federal fiscal years, which run from October 1 to September 30.

#### Federal Means-Tested Programs and Tax Credits

provide cash payments or assistance with health care, nutrition, education, housing, or other needs to people with relatively low income or few assets.

In the past 40 years, spending on the government's major means-tested programs and tax credits grew more than tenfold (excluding the effects of inflation).

Over the next decade, spending on those programs will continue to rise under current law, CBO projects, driven mainly by growth in



#### Distribution of Spending in 2012 (Billions of 2012 dollars)



#### \$500 \$18 \$36 \$34 Supplemental Child Mousing Pell Nutrition Mustinen Assistance Grants

#### What Explains Changes in Spending?

Two forces have driven the growth of spending on means-tested programs and tax credits since 1972: increases in the number of people participating in those programs and increases in spending per participant. Both of those increases are the result of multiple factors.



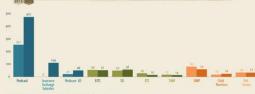
#### Changes in Spending Between 1991 ○ and 2011 ●

Exhaling the Best of Inflation, total federal spending on major means-tested programs and tax credits more than tripled over the two decades from 1951 to 2011 (the latest year for which participation and total are available). Spending for Medical grow by the largest amount, partly because participation in the program doubled during that period. Participation also doubled for SNAP, and average spending per participant rose for all of the programs for which data are available.



#### Projected Changes in Spending Between 2012 and 2023 (Billions of 2012 dollars)

If current laws do not change, feeling spending on Medicaid and y delinen meass-tested programs that provide health care will shoot up over the next 19 service. CBO projects (even the radjusting for inflation). But inflation-adjusted spending on most of the other means-tested programs and tax refers a distinct provide health care will shoot up over the next 19 service. CBO projects (even that are designed in the control of the other means-tested programs and tax refers a distinct provide health care will shoot up over the next 19 service. The control of the other means-tested programs are the control of the other means the other means



Notes: Stating in 2012, Medicald eligibility is espected to be extended in many states to people with income near or below the powerty level, to addition, same people with law or moderate income will quality for federal

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#### Federal Means-Tested Programs and Tax Credits

Earned

Income

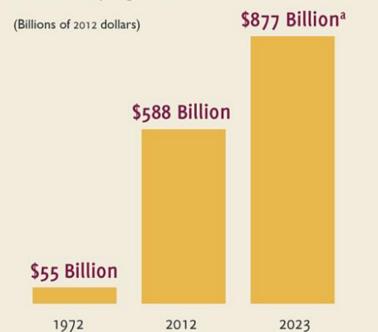
(EITC)

Tax Credit

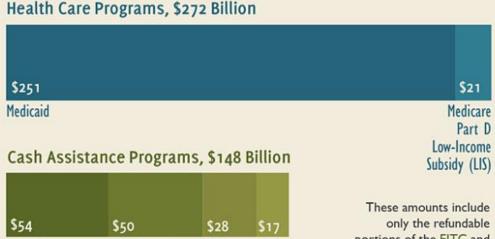
provide cash payments or assistance with health care, nutrition, education, housing, or other needs to people with relatively low income or few assets.

In the past 40 years, spending on the government's major means-tested programs and tax credits grew more than tenfold (excluding the effects of inflation).

Over the next decade, spending on those programs will continue to rise under current law, CBO projects, driven mainly by growth in health care programs.



#### Distribution of Spending in 2012 (Billions of 2012 dollars)



Temporary

Assistance

for Needy

Families (TANF)

Child

Tax

Credit

(CTC)

portions of the EITC and CTC (the portions that are paid to tax filers because they exceed filers' tax liabilities).

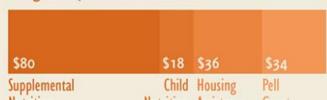
#### Nutrition, Housing, and Education Programs, \$168 Billion

Supplemental

Security

Income

(SSI)



#### What Explains Changes in Spending?

Two forces have driven the growth of spending on means-tested programs and tax credits since 1972: increases in the number of people participating in those programs and increases in spending per participant. Both of those increases are the result of multiple factors.

1972

Sending per Pa participation a Statis Added of **Federal Spending** The number of people receiving on Means-Tested amount spent on benefits from these each person receiving **Programs** programs has grown benefits has risen programs shown substantially in since 1972, especially here were created after 1972; others the past four for health care were expanded decades programs by changing eligibility Perior recer un Cost of Providing ncteases in Ben oulation Grou recession and high The Lawmakers in the cost of unemployment reduce total U.S. have raised benefit medical care and people's income, making population has amounts for various other goods and more people eligible grown by almost means-tested services pushed up for means-tested half since programs and spending for some assistance

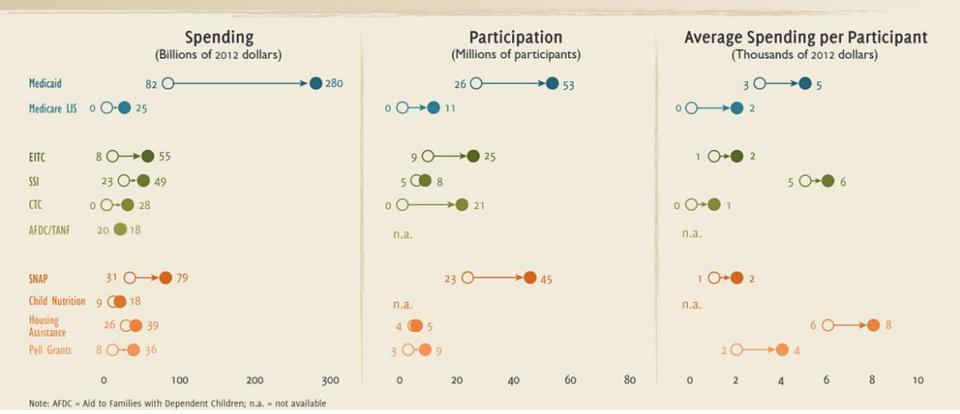
tax credits over

the years

programs

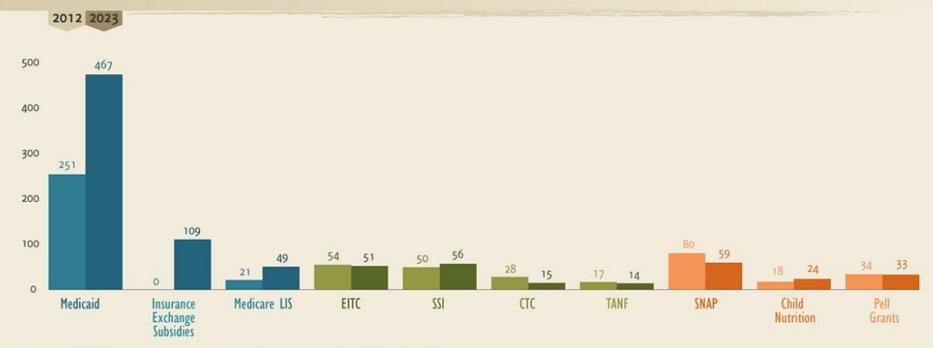
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#### Projected Changes in Spending Between 2012 and 2023 (Billions of 2012 dollars)

If current laws do not change, federal spending on Medicaid and other means-tested programs that provide health care will shoot up over the next 10 years, CBO projects (even after adjusting for inflation). But inflation-adjusted spending on most of the other means-tested programs and tax credits is projected to decline under current law.



Notes: Starting in 2014, Medicaid eligibility is expected to be extended in many states to people with income near or below the poverty level. In addition, some people with low or moderate income will qualify for federal subsidies to help them buy health insurance through new insurance exchanges.



#### The 2012 Long-Term Budget Outlook

CBO's long-term projections reflect two broad scenarios:



#### CBO's Extended Baseline Scenario

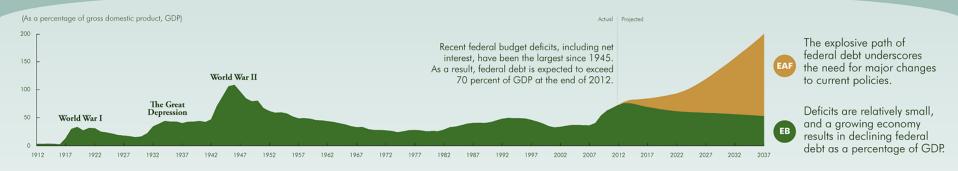
Reflects the assumption that current laws generally remain unchanged, implying that lawmakers will allow tax increases and spending cuts scheduled under current law to occur and that they will forgo measures routinely taken in the past to avoid such changes. Noninterest spending continues to rise, however, pushed up by the aging of the population and the rising costs of health care, and revenues reach historically high levels.



#### CBO's Extended Alternative Fiscal Scenario

Maintains what might be deemed current policies, as opposed to current laws, implying that lawmakers will extend most tax cuts and other forms of tax relief currently in place but set to expire and that they will prevent automatic spending reductions and certain spending restraints from occurring. Therefore, revenues remain near their historical average, and the gap between noninterest spending and revenues widens over the long term.

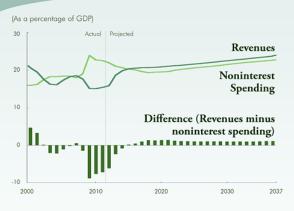
#### Federal Debt Held by the Public, Historically and Projected Under Two Policy Scenarios

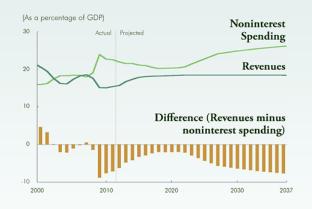


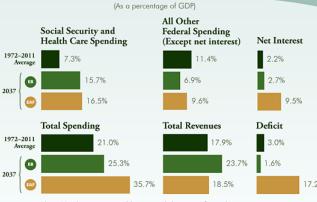
#### Extended Baseline Scenario

#### Extended Alternative Fiscal Scenario

#### Components of the Federal Budget



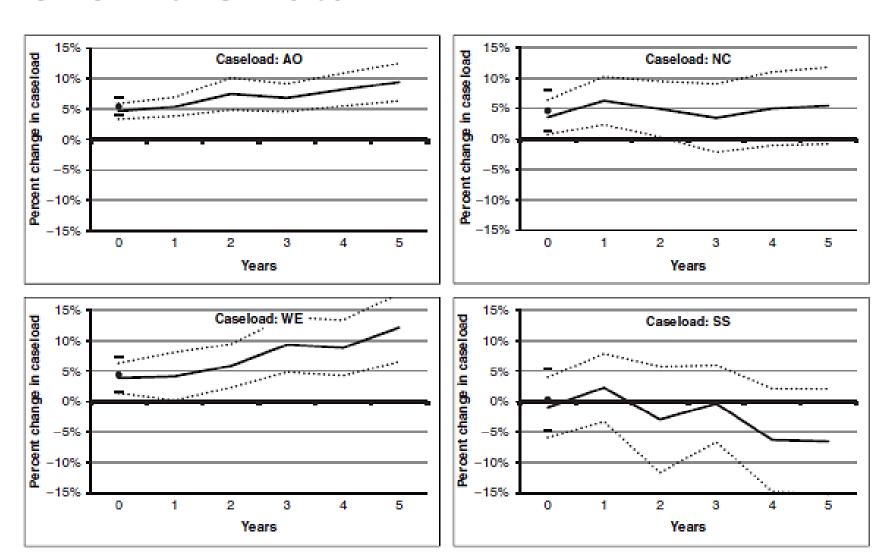




Note: Numbers may not add up to totals because of rounding.

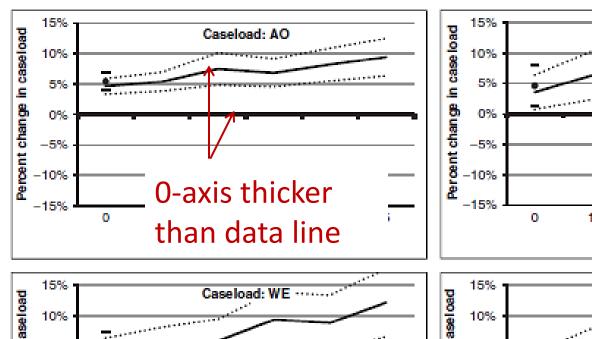
# Use Best Practices

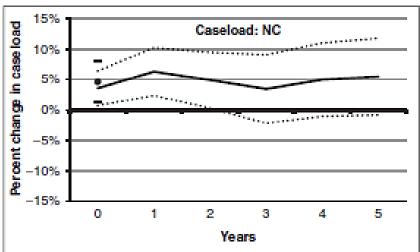
#### **Show the Data**

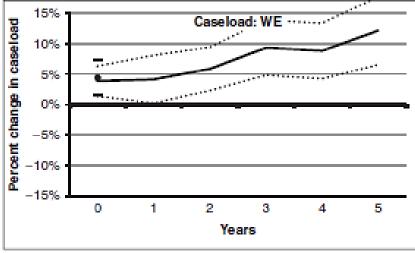


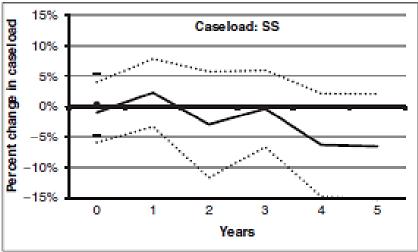
Jacob Klerman and Caroline Danielson, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 2011

#### **Show the Data**

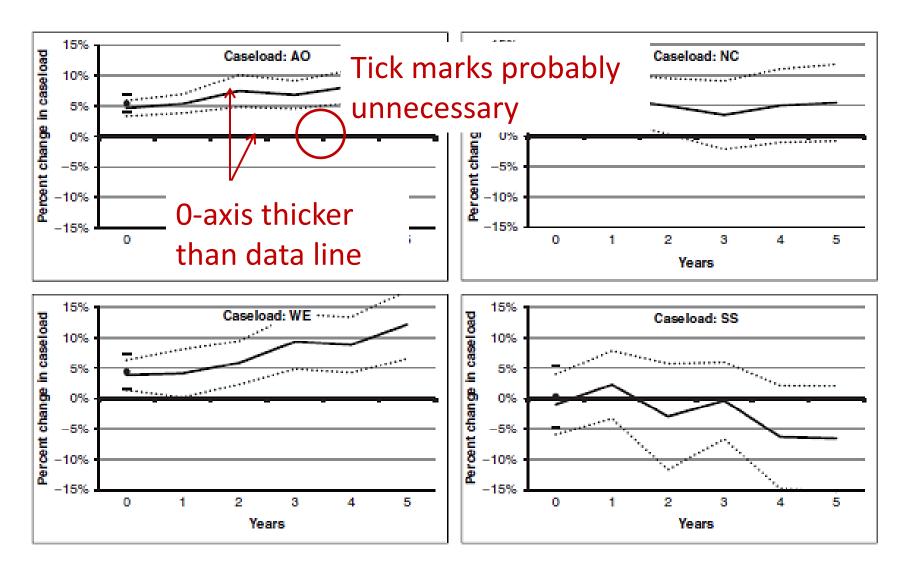




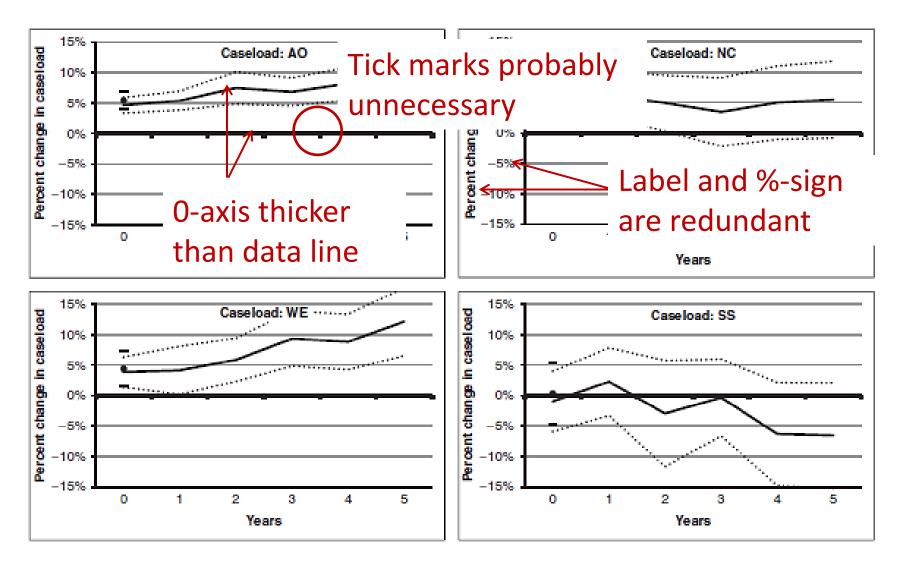




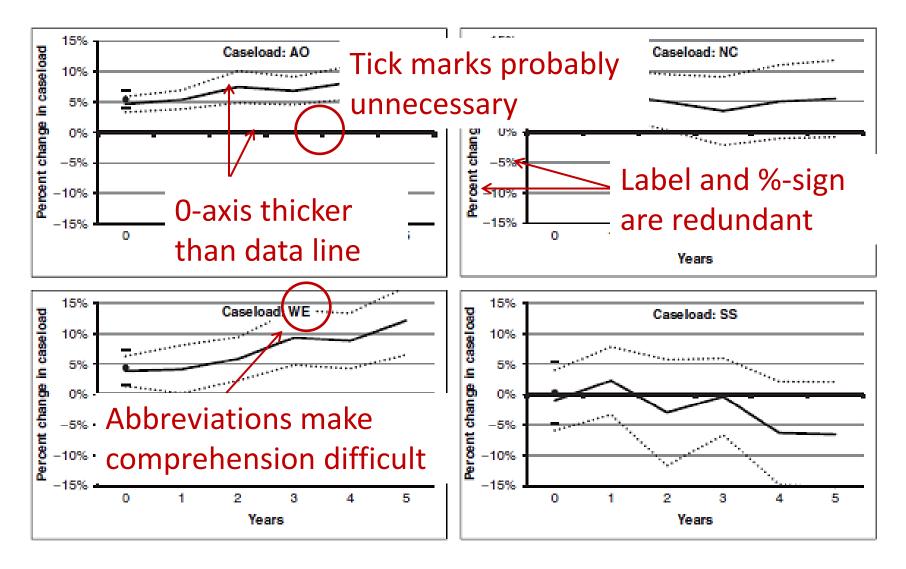
Jacob Klerman and Caroline Danielson, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 2011

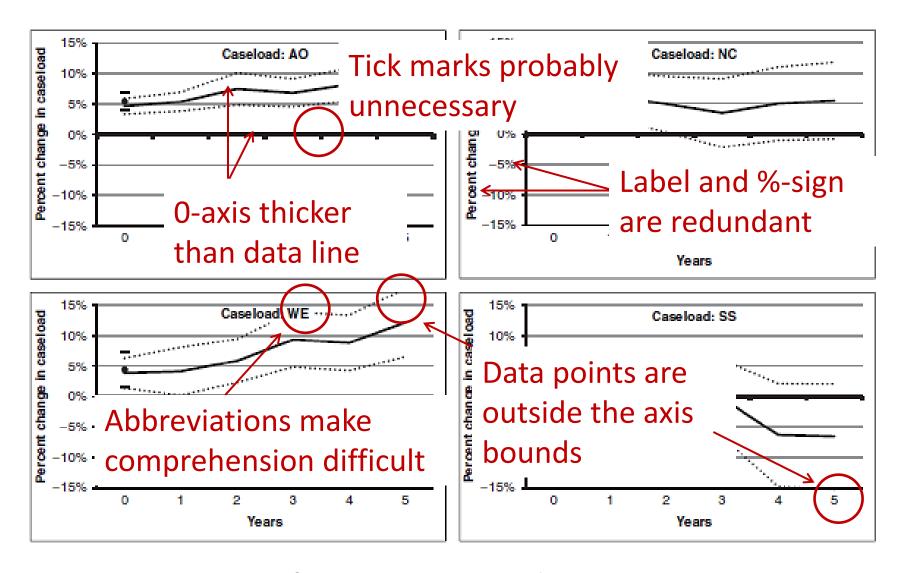


Jacob Klerman and Caroline Danielson, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 2011



Jacob Klerman and Caroline Danielson, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 2011

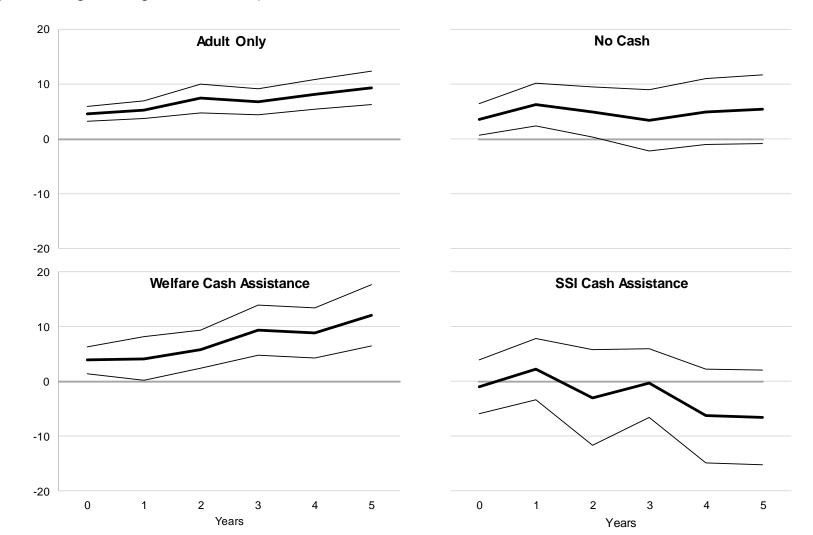




Jacob Klerman and Caroline Danielson, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 2011

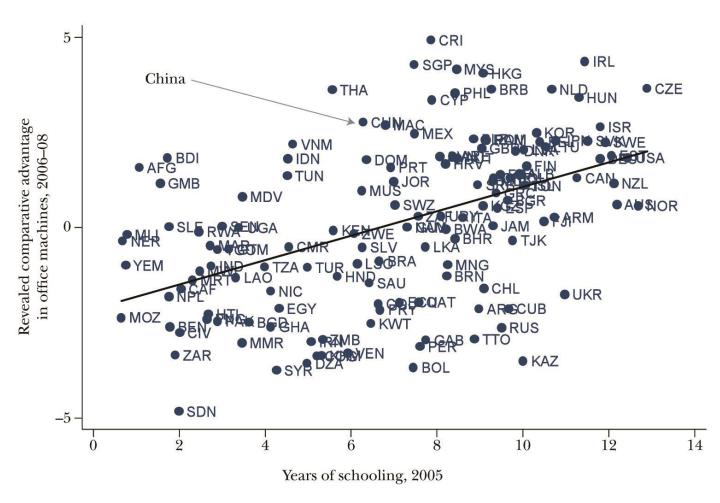
### Implied Impulse Response Functions for Different Caseloads

(Percentage change in caseload)



### **Reduce Clutter**

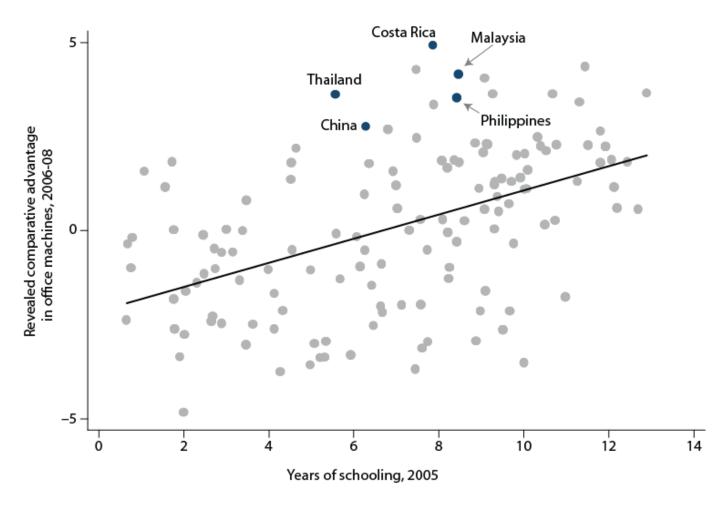
Figure 4 **Education and Exports of Office Machines** 



Gordon Hanson, Journal of Economic Perspectives, Spring 2012

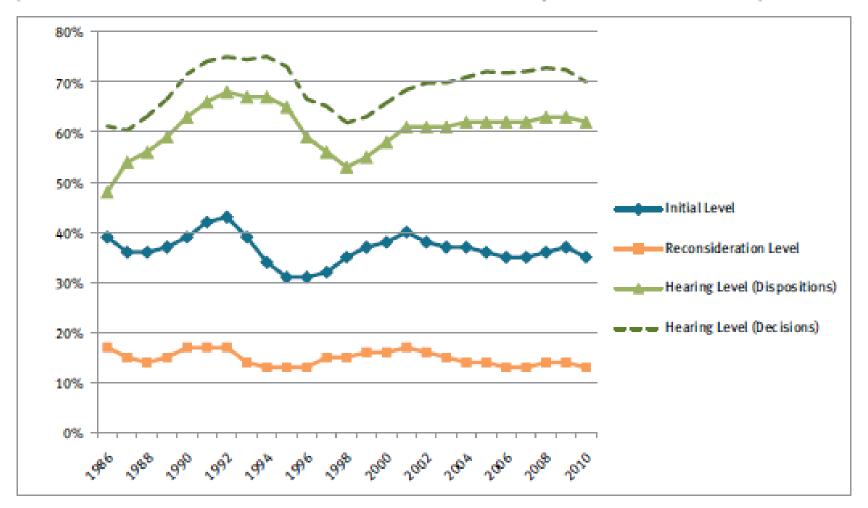
### **Reduce Clutter**

Figure 4
Education and Exports of Office Machines



### **Integrate Text and Graphics**

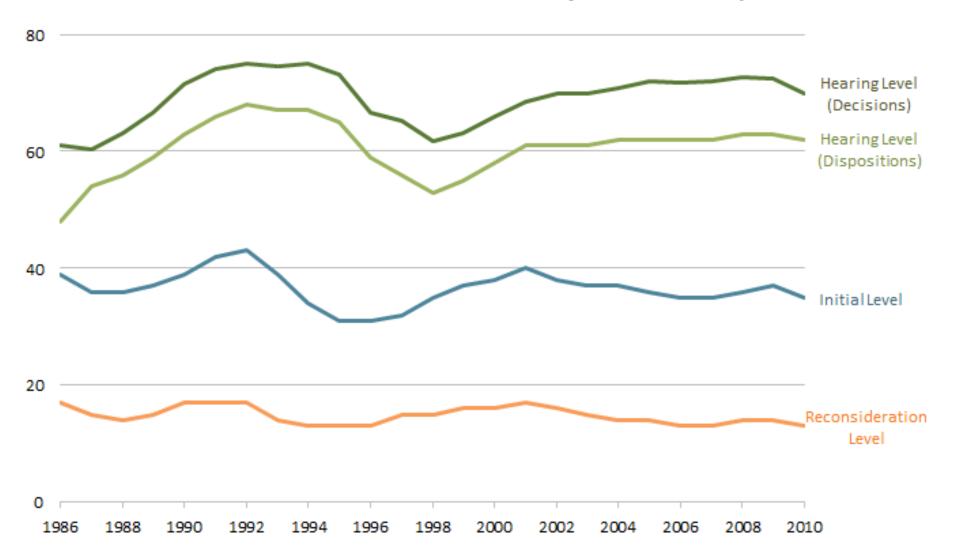
7. Combined DI and SSI Allowance Rates at Each Level of Adjudication—Fiscal Years 1986-2010



Social Security Advisory Board, Aspects of Disability Decision Making: Data and Materials, February 2012

### **Integrate Text and Graphics**

7. Combined DI and SSI Allowance Rates at Each Level of Adjudication—Fiscal years 1986-2010



## Use Appropriate Tools

### Standard Tools

Newer Tools

Excel

R

Stata

Tableau

SAS

JavaScript

Open Office

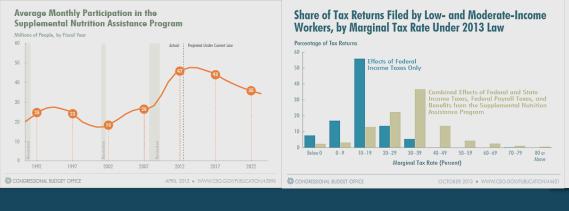
Google Charts

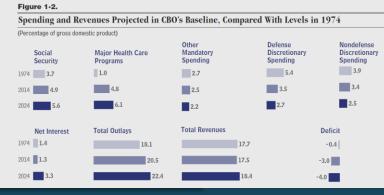
If your tool doesn't let you create the visualization you want, get a different tool.

## Do the figures in this report illustrate its main points?

## What should the reader learn from the figure?

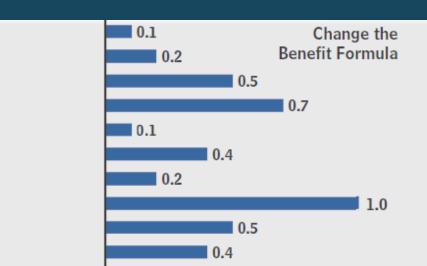
Is the figure understandable outside the confines of the report?



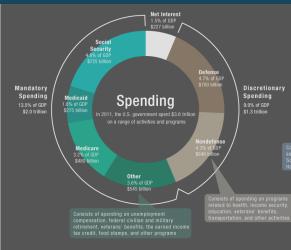


# The purpose of visualization is insight, not pictures

### -Ben Shneiderman







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